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EDMUND AND VELINA,

A LEGENDARY TALE.

AND

ALBERT AND ELLEN,

A DANISH BALLAD.

*By Alexander Jaffray Writer in Edinburgh
a son of the Provost of Sterling.*

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EDMUND AND WILLIAM

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ALBERT AND ELLIS

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TO

DAVID DOIG, LL. D.---F. S. S. A.

RECTOR OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, STIRLING,

AUTHOR OF LETTERS ON THE SAVAGE STATE,

POEM ON THE VIEW FROM STIRLING CASTLE,

&c. &c.

SIR,

I AM highly gratified by the politeness with which you permitted me to dedicate the following juvenile essays to you, as well as by the approbation you was pleased to express of them. I am sensible, however, that partiality to a young friend, may have hindered you from seeing defects, or have induced you to overlook them.

YOUR profound classical knowledge, which has rendered you so eminent in your profession, the anxious solicitude you have ever shown for the instruction of those who have had the happiness to be placed under your tuition, and your unremitting attention to the interests of youth, even at your advanced period of life, are so well known, and gratefully felt, as
would

would render all that I could say but a faint echo of the public voice.

NEITHER is it only by a profound knowledge of the antient languages, and by your success as an instructor of youth, that you have rendered yourself eminent;—as a philosopher, and a poet, you have obtained a distinguished reputation, which will flourish when you yourself shall be no more, and when there shall not be one of your numerous pupils remaining, to dwell with veneration and gratitude on the virtues and abilities of their learned and worthy preceptor.

BUT that a life, so valuable to the youth of my native town, as well as to the learned world in general, may be long preserved, is the sincere wish of,

S I R,

Your most obliged,

And obedient humble servant,

EDINBURGH,
AUG. 14. 1797. }

The AUTHOR.

*Mr. James Smith in Edin
bro of the ... of Stirling*

EDMUND AND VELINA.

WASH'D by the rolling streams of Tay,
Near Gowrie's fertile lands,
With lofty towers and battlements,
There Elcho Castle * stands. 4

Where many doughty Lords have dwelt,
In chivalry renowned ;
Who, in their Country's cause, could brook
A fore, or deadly wound. 8

* ELCHO CASTLE is situated upon the banks of the river Tay, a few miles below the town of Perth ; and is now the property of the Earl of Wemyss.

It is frequently mentioned by Blind Harry, in his life of Sir William Wallace ; and in those days it must have been a place of considerable strength.

Lord Bertram owned these stately halls,
 Who gloried to defend
 The poor man 'gainst oppression's arm,
 And stand his steady friend.

15

He wedded, when in early life,
 Sweet Elenor the fair,
 Famed for the beauties of her face,
 And for her virtues rare.

16

This peerless pair, admir'd by all,
 In mutual love did live ;
 Indulgent Heaven had pour'd a store,
 Yet, had one boon to give.

20

No offspring graced their splendid board,
 The source of future hope,
 To cheer the gloomy eve of age,
 When they to earth must drop.

24

But, who has right to claim from Heav'n

More than it would bestow ?—

Oft, what appears to us a bliss,

Is source of future wo.

28

Yet Heaven was pleased that boon to grant,
To bless this happy pair ;
In time was born, in time grew up,
A lovely daughter fair. 32

Her father and her mother's worth
Was planted in her breast ;
And on VELINA's lovely form,
Her mother's was imprest. 36

And many Lords, in courteous style,
Did her affection crave ;
But, none did ever gain her love,
Save EDMUND young and brave. 40

He often had with Bertram fought,
When Scotland was oppress'd ;
And he, to Elcho's stately halls,
Was still a welcome guest. 44

His birth unknown, and dire the fate
That kept his birth obscure—
Perhaps, some Knight, or Lordling born,
Though then dependant, poor. 48

A handsome form, a gen'rous soul,
Stored with each manly grace,
Where courage, mercy, friendship, shared
Alike in it a place.

52

He wooed Velina's tender heart,
In vain he did not woo ;
And oft, by mutual plighted faith,
Each vowed they would be true.

56

Oft did they stray the verdant mead,
Or fought the shady grove ;
And every moment as it passed,
They thought and talked of love.

60

But prudence bade them, while they loved,
Their mutual passion hide :
Though Edmund found Lord Bertram kind,
He knew his lordly pride.

64

Yet all their care could not deceive
Lord Bertram's watchful eye ;
He saw the tender glance that passed,
And marked the love-sick sigh ;

68

He saw the anxious wish they had,
The secret bower to seek ;
And mark'd the rose, that lately bloom'd,
Fade on VELINA's cheek.

72

Thus, soon, he feared, his flatt'ring hopes
Of an alliance great,
With some rich Lord in wealth and power,
Would meet abortive fate.

76

One day, he EDMUND drew aside,
While rage his face express'd ;
And, in a style he seldom used,
He thus the youth address'd :

80

“ Perfidious wretch ! is't thus that thou
“ My friendship dost repay ?
“ To steal my daughter from my arms,
“ My confidence betray ?

84

“ Thou upstart vile ! who lately toiled
“ To gain a scanty bread :
“ I took thee from thy wretched cot ;
“ Now by my bounty fed.

88

“ Begone ! and instant leave my halls,
“ Nor tempt my vengeance dread ;
“ Which, if thy merits I’d requite,
“ I’d pour upon thy head. 92

“ Begone ! ”—then instantly withdrew.
“ —*A wretch—an upstart vile—!*”
EDMUND repeated ; while his breast
With grief and pride did boil. 96

Had any but Lord Bertram dared
Him with such names to brand,
Longer must needs have been his sword,
More dext’rous far his hand. 100

“ —*I took thee from thy wretched cot—!*”
“ Curs’d be the fatal day,
“ On which, from that contented cot,
“ My wand’ring steps did stray.” 104

He said—then sought VELINA’s bower,
And found the maid alone,
(Whom Bertram, fired with rage, had left,
And told what he had done.) 108

“ Spare ! spare ! ” she cried, “ Oh ! EDMUND spare

“ My sick, my broken heart ;

“ Forbear to say the word—*Adieu* !

“ Since now that we must part. 112

“ Away ! and leave these halls I hate,

“ Bereft of all I loved ;

“ And would to Heaven thou couldst forget

“ I e’er thy suit approved. 116

“ For soon, I fear, I will resign

“ This sicken’d lease of life ;

“ Nay ! welcome death, were’t not to live

“ To be my EDMUND’S wife. 120

“ Away ! and when a distant space,

“ Thy love from thee removes ;

“ In every sun-beam see her smile,

“ Hear on each breeze—She loves. 124

“ Nor time, nor fate, shall change my love ;

“ Thy absence I will mourn,

“ Till time and fate, with cruelty tired,

“ Shall bid my love return. 128

" But, ere you go, grant this request,
" Tell me the tale you shun ;
" By all I've learnt, by all I see,
" You are not Duncan's son. 132

" Do not refuse, but to thy love
" This secret dark impart ;
" If full of wo, 'twill well besit
" Her sick, her broken heart." 136

" Since you demand," the youth replied,
" The story I will give ;
" Ere now I would, but feared you'd think,
" 'Twas meant but to deceive. 140

" Already my VELINA knows
" How EDMUND was employed,
" Ere glory and the din of arms
" Him from his cot decoyed ; 144

" How cheerful he with Duncan toil'd,
" And careless drew the net ;
" The fish we caught supplied our wants,
" For these, they were not great. 148

- " One morn he call'd me from the hut—
" EDMUND, says he, behold
" These glitt'ring spears, these clanging shields,
" Now borne by warriors bold. 152
- " See ! where they wind their flipp'ry path,
" Mid crags bedrench'd with snow—
" This is the band Lord Bertram leads
" Against our English foe. 156
- " 'Tis glory, and his Country's cause,
" That calls him to the field ;
" And many a corpse shall lie in blood,
" Ere Elcho's Lord will yield. 160
- " While thus he spoke, I felt my breast
" With heat unusual fired ;
" To seek for glory in the field,
" Of Duncan I required. 164
- " Yes go, he said ; but, EDMUND, I
" A secret will impart,
" Which oft hath fill'd with tears my eyes,
" With grief my aged heart. 168

“ One morn, as on the beach I stood,
“ And trimm’d my little boat,
“ Some distant groans, borne on the breeze,
“ As from the sea were brought. 172

“ I listen’d,—then they died away,
“ Now heard,—they died again ;
“ In vain my eyes fought through the mist
“ That hung upon the main. 176

“ But as the breeze began to calm,
“ The groans again I heard ;
“ And slowly, as the mist withdrew,
“ A floating wreck appear’d. 180

“ Then quickly from the beach, I launch’d
“ Into the sea, my boat ;
“ And ’gainst the waves, still rolling high,
“ With lusty strokes I fought, 184

“ At length, the floating wreck I reach’d,
“ And found a helpless dame,
“ Cold were her hands, and pale her cheek,
“ Yet liv’d the vital flame ! 188

“ With speed I rowed back to the shore,
“ Fearful she might expire ;
“ I bore her to my humble cot,
“ And rous’d my little fire. 192

“ Whate’er could tend her to restore,
“ Annette my wife applied ;
“ With care she nurs’d the vital spark,
“ To sooth her woes she tried. 196

“ Another day she only liv’d,
“ Painful was that day too ;
“ A child she bore, and then expir’d—
“ EDMUND ! that child was you. 200

“ Her tale, there was no time to learn—
“ From whence, or whither bound ;
“ But on a corpse, cast on the shore,
“ These pictures twain were found. 204

“ This is the picture of thy dame,
“ Her very face divine !
“ EDMUND ! as like as that clear pool
“ Reflects this face of mine. 208

“ And this, the picture of the man

“ I found cast on the sand !

“ For both are present to my mind,

“ As if they there did stand.”—

212

Here paus'd the youth, then from his pouch

A little box he drew ;

“ VELINA ! there, my parents are—

“ Parents, I never knew !”

216

“ Shew me the pictures !” Bertram cried,

As to the bower he sprung ;

Amaz'd he look'd—his eye-balls roll'd,

His lip in silence hung.

220

(EDMUND he saw go to the bower,

He follow'd him in haste ;

And in a thicket near, concealed,

He heard all that had pass'd.)

224

“ EDMUND ! forgive,” Lord Bertram cried,

While on his neck he hung,

“ Forgive the harsh injurious words,

“ Which rage forc'd from my tongue.

228

“ This is my brother’s picture here,
“ Who half these lands did own ;
“ And, EDMUND, now his right devolves
“ On you his only son. 232

“ To France he fled with his young king,
“ David *, great Bruce now gone ;
“ When Baliol †, back’d by English arms,
“ Usurp’d the Scottish throne. 236

“ He took with him his new made bride,
“ Rosina, young and fair :
“ Time pass’d away ; of them, till now,
“ Nought could I ever hear.”— 240

“ ’Tis I that must forgiveness ask ;
“ The wrong was on my part,”
(EDMUND replied), “ that e’er I dared
“ To woo VELINA’s heart, 244

“ Still hold the lands : all I request,
“ Is sweet VELINA’s hand ;
“ And soon the holy father Rhind
“ Shall tie the nuptial band.”— 248

D

* David II. † Edward Baliol.

“ Ah ! gen’rous youth ! dost thou forgive

“ The wrong I have thee done ?

“ Ah, would to Heaven ! thou sooner hadst

“ Thy birth to me made known. 252

“ Yes, take VELINA to thy arms,

“ Thee her I freely give ;

“ May heaven its choicest blessings pour,

“ And happy may ye live. 256

“ This night, the holy father Rhind

“ Shall tie the nuptial knot ;

“ And in the feast, the dance, the song,

“ All wrongs shall be forgot. 260

“ And half the lands I now possess,

“ To you shall be restored ;

“ This I’ll proclaim ; the vassals shall

“ Now own you as their Lord.” 264

As when the ship by boist’rous gales,

Is tossed to and fro ;

Now mounts on high, and now is hid

Deep in th’ abyfs below ; 268

The sails, the helm, do useless prove
'Gainst the unruly wave ;
Aghast the mariner doth stand,
And dreads a watry grave : 272

But see ! the storm begins to calm,
The wish'd for port is near,
And now in safety gains the land,
When joy takes place of fear : 276

So, EDMUND and VELINA fair,
Who, lately plung'd in grief,
From all the pangs of wo they felt,
Now find unhoped relief. 280

Their souls no bounds of joy do know,
As through the crowd they glide,
And EDMUND to the altar leads,
His young and blushing bride. 284

The feast was spread, and joy did smile,
The shell of mirth went round ;
The song was rais'd, the spacious halls
Did echo back the sound. 288

And Duncan, to whom EDMUND owed

His life, VELINA, all ;

In his old age, a shelter found

In Elcho's stately hall.

ALBERT AND ELLEN.

A

DANISH BALLAD.

ALBERT, a Scandinavian youth, had become deeply enamoured of ELLEN the daughter of Calmar, chief of Mona. But in order to render himself a worthy partner of her bed, (as was the custom of that warlike people), he behoved to signalize himself in some brave martial achievement. Accordingly, with a chosen band, he undertakes an expedition against his enemies; knowing, that if he returned victorious, the possession of the mistress of his heart would be an ample reward for all the dangers he had encountered, and that, should he fall in battle, his soul would be received into the joys of Valhalla. His absence, however, and the perilous situation in which he is placed, are cause of great anxiety and distress to ELLEN, who loves him; and who, rather than risk a life so dear to her, seems willing to dispense with that qualification in her lover which the custom of her country requires.

ALBERT AND ELLEN.

SEE! the northern tempests gather,
Hark! the sweeping whirlwinds howl;
Thunder, lightning, rain, together
Suit the gloom of ELLEN's soul. 4

" Return, brave ALBERT, to my arms;
" Enough of glory you have won:
" Here you shall lie secure from harms:
" Return! and let the fight be done. 8

" Leave the bloody field of battle,
" Fly the horrid scene of death,
" Where, the spears and helmets rattle,
" Mid the fight, on Leda's heath. 12

" Mangled limbs and bodies lying;
" Heroes fighting, drench'd in gore;
" Brave men falling; cowards flying
" From thy awful arm of power. 16

“ In vain—To ALBERT let me fly then,
“ Every danger will I brave,
“ Fight with him, or, should he die, then
“ Find with him a common grave. 20

“ Your halls, O Mona! have no charms,
“ Whilst my ALBERT is not here;
“ Nor can your mirth footh the alarms,
“ Which my anxious bosom tear. 24

“ Little know’st thou, lordly father,
“ Whither now thy ELLEN goes :
“ Little know’st thou, gentle mother;
“ Soon you’ll wake to meet your woes. 28

“ Hence, to ALBERT shall I fly then,
“ Every danger will I brave,
“ Fight with him, and, should he die, then
“ Find with him a welcome grave.” 32

More vivid still the lightnings brighten,
Winds howl, and louder thunders roll;
Yet, all combin’d, they do not frighten,
They suit the gloom of ELLEN’s soul. 36

Quick the prancing barb she mounted,
All in warlike suit array'd ;
Many miles she pass'd uncounted,
Nought could stop the frantic maid. 40

Not the angry thunder's storm,
Nor the boist'rous howling wind,
Nor the lightning's awful form,
Could strike terror in her mind. 44

As her doubtful way she speeds on,
Over hill, through dale and wood ;
Dire mishap ! she dashes headlong,
Shrieking, in a foaming flood. 48

" Fear not, fear not, fair young lady,"
(Loud, a thund'ring voice did cry) ;
" Odin * plac'd me here to save you ;
" Hence, with me to Odin fly." 52

* ODIN was the god of the Scandinavians. Valhalla, his palace, was placed in the clouds. Here he received such heroes as died in battle. Their amusements there were fighting and cutting one another to pieces ; but, as soon as the hour of repast came, they were all made sound again. They returned to Odin's hall ; their food was the flesh of the boar Serimner, and their liquor they drank out of the skulls of their enemies. See Mallet's *North. Antiq.*

Arms unseen around her twining,
Snatch'd her from the foaming flood ;
In hideous form, before her shining,
Messenger of Odin stood. 56

Not the angry thunder's storm,
Nor the lightning, nor the wind ;
But, the spectre's hideous form,
Struck with terror ELLEN's mind. 60

" Do not dread me, lovely ELLEN ;
" Come, to Odin's halls ascend :
" Joy awaits you in our dwelling ;
" Mighty Odin is your friend." 64

" Spectre, no, I must not tarry,
" Now I haste to Leda's heath—"
" —Where's a barb, that will you carry
" To that horrid scene of death ? 68

" In thousand pieces is he shatter'd,
" Hurling down that rapid flood,
" In thousand pieces is he scatter'd,
" The prancing barb you whilom rode." 72

Thus said—then in his arms he took her ;

Quick he darted through the air :

Life, from fear, almost forsook her :

“ Why dost shake, thou lovely fair ? ”

76

“ ’Tis the wind, dost thou not hear it ?

“ ’Tis the cold, that makes me shake. ”

“ Be calm, ye winds ”—halloo’d the spirit :

The winds are silent at his beck.

80

On, on he sped with wild career ;

The lightning did not quicker fly :

And still she trembled o’er with fear—

“ Why dost thou shake, fair ELLEN, why ? ”

84

“ ’Tis the thund’ring peals aclashing :

“ Hark ! the darken’d skies they rend.

“ ’Tis the vivid lightning flashing,

“ Which distracts my timid mind. ”

88

“ Halloo ! ye lightnings, cease your flashing ;

“ Why dost thou ELLEN strike with fear ?

“ Halloo, ye thunders ! cease your clashing. ”—

Now the sky was calm and clear.

92

“ Still thou tremblest, lovely ELLEN ;
“ Loud thy beating heart I hear :
“ Do not shake, we’re near our dwelling,
“ Soon shall Odin’s hall appear.” 96

He spoke, and clouds opposing parted ;
Wide the airy portals flew ;
Quick as lightning on they darted ;
Odin’s halls appear’d in view, 100

Gloomy ghosts of murder’d warriors,
Stand as porters at the gate ;
Skulls of cowards, on the barriers,
Serve as lamps to hold their light. 104

Ghastly spectres flock around her ;
In one hand each held a skull,
In the other, a dart to wound her—
“ Haloo ! of blood we’ll have our fill.” 108

Trembling mov’d the lovely ELLEN—
“ Fear them not,” (the spectre cried) ;
“ None dare hurt thee in our dwelling,
“ Thou art Odin’s destin’d bride.”— 112

“ Kill me sooner !” (cried the fair one),
“ With thy falchion strike me dead :
“ Save ALBERT, never shall I love one :
“ ALBERT only will I wed. ” — 116

“ —ALBERT ! heaven kind repose him,
“ Now lies bleeding on the heath ;
“ Soon shall the narrow house inclose him —
“ Dost thou weep for ALBERT’s death ? ” 120

She shriek’d, and, waking, look’d around her,
Saw her mother bath’d in tears :
The horrid scene does still confound her ;
Thinks she dreamt, but still she fears. 124

“ Why dost thou shake, oh tender mother ?
“ Falls for whom that trickling tear ? ”
“ —Ah ! cold and lifeless is thy lover,
“ Stretch’d in peace on yonder bier. 128

“ Boldly fought th’ undaunted hero ;
“ Foes from his conqu’ring falchion fled :
“ But, a distant, coward arrow,
“ Laid him with the silent dead. 132

" Rise, oh rise ! my dearest ELLEN ;
 " Rise thee with a heart of wo :
 " Sad and mournful is our dwelling ;
 " Joy no more shall Mona know." 136

Sad and mournful rose fair ELLEN ;
 Heavy was her heart with wo ;
 Sad, ever sad, their once gay dwelling,
 Joy no more did Mona know. 140

She ran, she flew, she knew not whither ;
 On ALBERT's name she wildly cried :
 " Oh ALBERT ! art thou gone for ever ?
 " For ELLEN why didst thou not bide ?" 144

She ran, she flew, at last she found him,
 Cold and lifeless on the bier ;
 She threw her lily arms around him,
 And bath'd his cheek with many a tear. 148

" 'Tis I, my ALBERT—'tis thy ELLEN."—
 " ALBERT's dead," (a youth replied),
 " And here we make his narrow dwelling—"
 " 'Tis too narrow," ELLEN cried. 152

Her pallid cheek, her bosom beating,
Her feeble sigh, her drooping head,
Bespoke her spirit fast retreating.—
She heav'd a groan—to heaven it fled.

156

Beneath the yew, beside yon ruin,
Sleep in death the youthful pair :
'Tis now the scene of love and wooing ;
No spectres keep their vigils there.

160



ALBERT AND ELIZABETH

Her gentle cheer, her calm bearing,
Her noble life, her devoted heart,
Her noblest gift, her noblest art,
The love that binds us to her heart.

Remember the year, 1850, when
She came in from the world of pain.

8:11:50



